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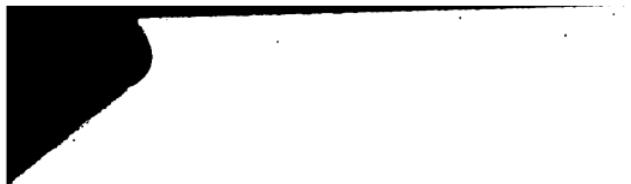
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A BROKEN ECHO





Not L. and G., Keynes William Pickering (Check List
(Revised after 1969))

A BROKEN ECHO



2

A BROKEN ECHO

A POEM

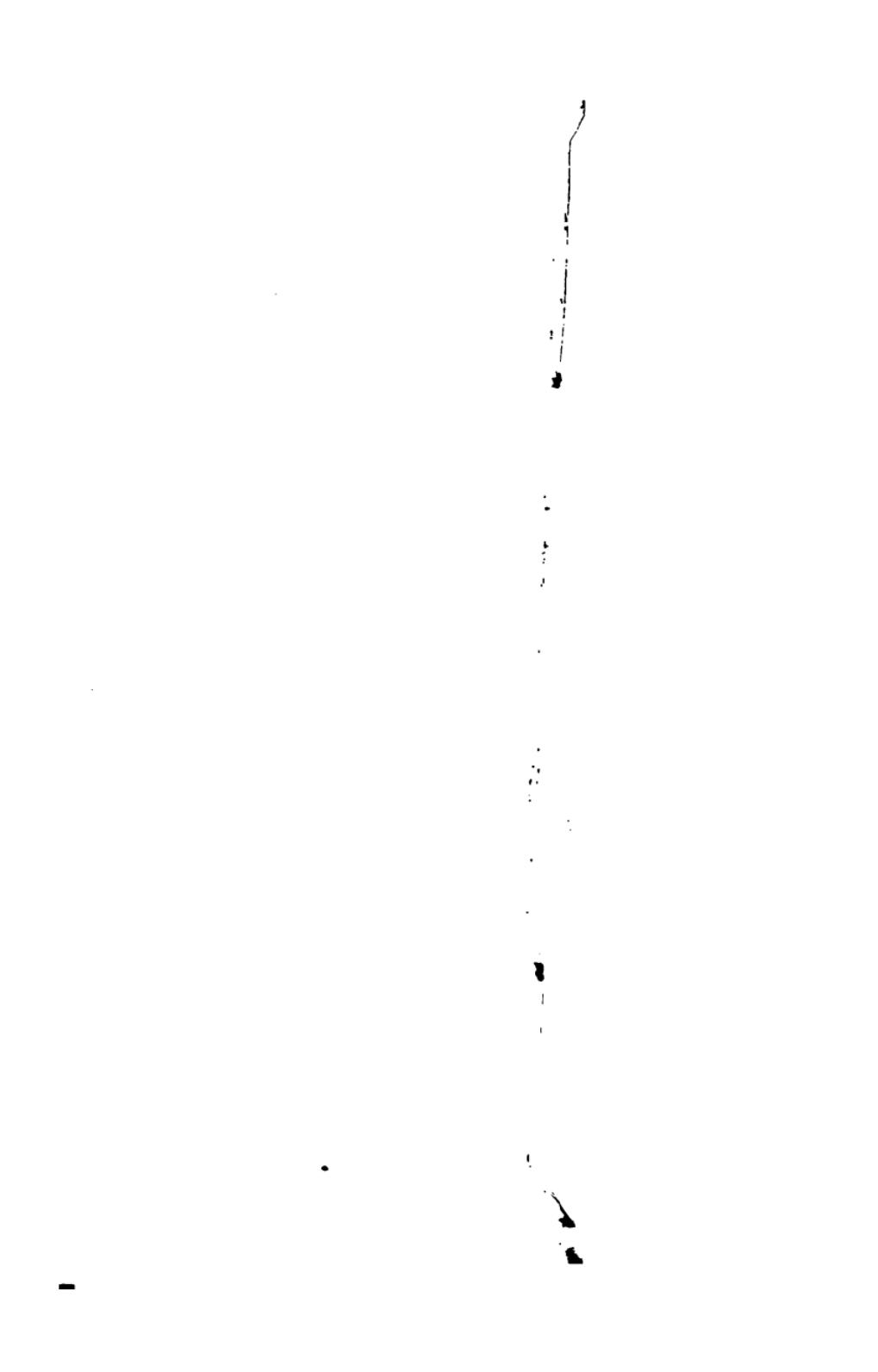
By Henry, T. H. H. M.



LONDON
WILLIAM PICKERING

1853





“ **THERE** is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar ;
I love not man the less, but nature more
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe and feel
What I can ne’er express, yet cannot all conceal.”

CHILDE HAROLD.

[REDACTED]

PREFACE.

LITTLE or no Preface is needful for that which is published anonymously, and consequently can interest but few. The following stanzas are the first offerings of one, who however unworthy to sing the praises of nature, may at least be believed to be one of her warmest admirers. That admiration, and the “amabilis insania,” long allowed as the privilege of incipient Rhymesters, are the sole excuses for this trifling publication. The stanzas pretend to little connexion, having been written for the most part at different places, under different circumstances, and at long intervals; they cannot hope for more than a stray smile of approbation from those of similar feelings with the author, and if they be deemed unworthy of this, “quiescent in pace.”





A BROKEN ECHO.

I.

HAVE not written that which he will
read
Who loves the studied action of a
tale,
But where my footsteps fate and fancy lead ;
And be it mine to wander as the gale,
'Midst that which careless eyes nor love, nor heed ;
An unconnected, varying theme I hail :
The voice that I have heard such scenes among,
Finds a faint echo in this broken song.

B

A BROKEN ECHO.

II.

Few years are mine, but if sometimes I breathe
A strain more suited to maturer time,
'Tis but that with the fairest flowers will wreath
Sad weeds, that unrestrained, unnoticed climb ;
I loathe the misanthrope, whose passions seethe
Upon the black stagnation of his rhyme,
Whose soul is as the mud where tides recede,
That rotting lies o'erstrewn with noisome weed.

III.

I love the sound of gaiety and mirth,
I love the voice of every happy thing,
The laugh of those who know few cares on earth,
The carol of the wild bird on the wing ;
The speaking eyes, whence young love hath his
birth,
The thrilling lay that beauty best can sing ;
For he that loves not music loves not thee,
Nature ! for thou art perfect harmony !

IV.

But I do worship things which some may scorn,
And others pause to gaze on, and forget ;
To them perchance of half their beauty shorn,
Because too oft, though not less brightly met ;
I am unto a new existence born,
When mid the loneliness of nature set,
A new existence of ecstatic joy,
And uncorrupted by the world's alloy ;

V.

A new existence of a bounding heart,
And soul that feels as though it ever laugh'd,
With limbs as light as though they were a part
Of the blithe winds, or of the clouds they waft ;
A new existence, where the scoffer's art
In renown fails, and pointless drops the shaft
That folly aims at ought more pure and high
Than the foul level of its stagnancy.

VI.

To be alone amid the silent gloaming,
To watch the landscape in the moon grow pale,
And fleecy clouds, that near her splendour roaming,
 Dissolve to silvery softness as they sail ;
To hearken to the distant ocean foaming,
Or the rude torrent's voice break up the vale,
While the soul drinks their influence, is to rise
More nigh to heaven, and leave earth's vanities ;

VII.

The vanities of that we mortals name
Society, which hath no social tie ;
Of the lips praising what the heart must blame,
 Of words anointing what disgusts the eye ;
Of masking purer feeling for false shame,
 Of sacrificing truth to euphony ;
Of bowing to the tinselled goddess set
O'er the vain world of whims, to Etiquette !

VIII.

Cease wayward pen ! O Folly, thou art sweet,
I blame and love thee, but do not revere ;
Without thine aid, how weary were the feet
Of hours that roll the dilatory year ;
I am no worshipper of thine, yet greet
Thy coming with a smile, for thou dost wear
The mask of happiness, 'tis but the mask ;
Let sceptic seek thy votaries and ask !

IX.

Yet can we not desert thee, for thou art
A portion of each life, year, hour, second ;
Of human action an essential part,
The giddy crowd rush on where thou hast
beckoned,
Girt for the strife and eager for the start,
Nor pain, nor toil are in the struggle reckoned,
Till each hath gained his crown of glittering dross,
And turned disconsolate to mourn his loss.

x.

Yet art thou sweet, but now no more of thee,
Although perchance thou guid'st this wandering
For sweeter far than thine unstable glee [strain,
A thousand thoughts come crowding o'er the
Some of a joyous aspect merrily, [brain,
As laughing maids, and some with solemn train
Yet sweet withal as pensive nuns, hail ye !
Nor shun my song, ye nymphs of Castalie !

xi.

O sweet it is through distant climes to wander
Unknown, although the heart had long been there,
Where eyes are brighter, and where hearts seem
fonder,
And paint the memory with the charms they wear,
Where lovelier streams through lovelier scenes
meander,
Where suns are warmer, and more soft the air ;
Where spots that fancy long hath pictured, lie
Before the gaze, in bright reality !

XII.

But God forbid that in a Briton's eyes,
Yea! of all those, whose country yet is free ;
Another land than that which saw arise
Their childhood's years, should dearer, fairer be ;
Though novel sights and varying scenes we prize,
And sweet allurements win us o'er the sea,
Whoe'er besides we love, where'er we roam,
A sigh to England, and to those at home.

XIII.

For O there is a charm that binds us ever
To spots where we in happy childhood roved,
A charm, that not the world or time can sever,
Connects our memory to the scenes we loved ;
Though as bright ripples on a hurrying river,
Those hours of gladness be for aye removed ;
Though loving hearts be gone, though some forget,
And some may smile, we can remember yet.

XIV.

There is a little spot by Leman's shore,
Near Meillerie's fair rocks and hallowed scene,
That the sweet summer breeze blows softest o'er,
Where woods are waving, and where slopes are
green ;
A hill behind, the broad blue lake before,
And vine-clad mountains o'er the waters seen,
And far, fair cottages are all in view,
And white sails bounding o'er the waters blue.

XV.

So looked it last to me, and gay and smiling
Were those around, without one thought of care,
While song and laughter were the hours beguiling,
From many a bosom, happy, young, and fair,
With thoughts as spring flowers fresh e'er yet defiling,
The world's dull blight had cast corruption there ;
But blithe as morning each young heart was
bounding,
And merry voices thro' the green wood sounding;

XVI.

The dream is o'er ! and where that joyous band ?
They are far scattered, and shall meet no more ;
And one hath fallen to death's withering hand,
And those she loved are left but to deplore
The blighted flower ; and in a distant land
Some wander and forget ; on that loved shore
The woods still wave, and fade and bloom again
We change and die, and scenes we loved remain.

1

The spot is as it was of old,
The water laps below,
And as of yore, the moon beams cold
On yon eternal snow ;

2

Still musically speaks the rill,
Or bird from out the brake,
Still vines that clothe the silent hill,
Slope greenly to the lake ;

C

3

But where art thou, whose voice was raised
Amid the young and gay,
Whose eyes o'er yon cold heights have gazed,
Alas ! more cold than they.

4

Fresh flowers are growing on the stem,
Where those thou lovedst grew,
Ah ! thou wert like—too like to them,
For thou art withered too.

5

Again upon my hearing fall
The notes of youthful glee,
From those, who in the festive hall
Laugh on, nor dream of thee ;

6

Glad souls have they, as was thine own,
And hearts that, blithe and young,
Like sundials mark those hours alone
That bear no clouds along :

But thou hast sought thy silent home ;
 Yet with the evening bell
Perchance thy spirit still may come
 To shores thou lovedst well.

A moment hover o'er the spot
 Where strayed thy form of earth,
And breathe, although we see thee not,
 Thy memory o'er our mirth.

XVII.

Vevay ! sweet Vevay, friendship's chosen seat,
 Where souls congenial in their mirth once met ;
Where with like warmth each heart responsive beat,
 Where suns on gladness rose, on gladness set ;
Thine were sweet hours of youth, perchance too
 sweet !

While musing o'er them memory's cheek is wet,
For those whom friendship joined on thy dear spot
Are severed—Vevay, be thou then forgot !



XVIII.

The shades of eve o'er Leman's waters close,
Far Jura's heights are tinged with sunset glow,
A blush just purples Dent du Midi's snows,
The dark blue Rhone with darker wave doth flow;
Hushed is the burst of song that nightly rose,
The wave's heard lapping on the stone below,
From yon gray tower steals the evening bell,
Vevay!—sweet Vevay still,—farewell! farewell!

XIX.

Farewell! alas that single word doth speak
A tale that is all human and all woe,
Of hearts to whom 'tis one to part and break,
Of steps that linger, and in ling'ring go;
Of woman's tears, and manhood's pallid cheek,
Of lips and looks that to each other grow,
And rend the soul in parting, the strong tear
From feelings, objects, ought two hearts can share.

xx.

Nay ! not the feelings, these ye cannot tear
From out the sanctuary of the mind ;
Though parched the soil, the spring may yet be
there, [find ;
The root may live though withered flowers we
The one shall burst again, the other bear ;
And this to things inanimate confined ?
Nay not the feelings ! though all else may part,
Affection is the ivy of the heart.

xxi.

Welcome, sweet sound ! alas, that there should be
A foe to blight thy joy ere well mature ;
A stern inevitable foe is he,
If late his steps, his vengeance not less sure,
Farewell doth wither, as the blight the tree ;
Each tender tie that friendship deemed secure :
'Tis thine to fill the cup of social mirth,
Which, ere the lip it reach, he strikes to earth.

XXII.

Farewell to thee, thou little world of joy !
Too bright to be an emblem of the greater,
Yet mingling oft the pleasures of the boy,
With something of the sorrows that come later ;
Thine were such pleasures as could never cloy ;
He who hath been of them participator,
Doth, as he wanders on, look back on thee,
The brightest landscape of life's scenery !

XXIII.

As they who voyage look back to shores receding,
And trace each haunt long years had made their
own,
Though clouded now the sun, and onward speeding,
The bark repeats the billows' threatening moan ;
Or he, who on the misty mountain treading,
Views o'er the vale the warmest sunshine thrown,
Or captives bless the single wandering light,
That breaks like memory on their dungeon's night.

xxiv.

'Tis sweet on scenes revisited to dwell,
And dream of happy days that there went by,
Of rambles through each wood, and o'er each fell,
Although the vision call a deep drawn sigh ;
Such sighs are holy, and it were not well
To drive such chastened joy from memory,
For mirth can never last for aye, but pain
Must intervene ere we may smile again.

xxv.

There is a sorrow of embittered years,
A writhing of the soul that cannot sleep,
Fierce in its agony of burning tears,
That lighten not the hearts of those that weep ;
The poignant mourning for an act that sears
The brain in retrospection, yet must keep
Its image in that brain, that may not burst,
But wither in the memory it hath nurst ;



xxvi.

There is a sorrow that time cannot quell,
Set in the lowering brow and lip comprest,
An inextinguishable spark from Hell,
That fiercer glows the deeper 'tis supprest ;
Till all good feeling with'ring in their cell,
That single passion riots in the breast,
Then bursts the lurking demon into fire,
And gluts his long premeditated ire.

xxvii.

There is a sorrow that an hour doth last,
That heightens joy, and gives a zest to pleasure,
By contrast sweet'ning every hour when past,
As doubly toil endears the sweets of leisure ;
The thorns that o'er the path of life are cast,
Lest joyful man should deem joy hath no measure,
Light clouds upon a summer sky, that render
The sun more grateful when he shines in splendour.

XXVIII.

But last and sweetest is the tender calm,
The melancholy soothing grief, whose hue
Melts o'er the too o'erflowing soul as balm,
Or glimpse of home to exile's tearful view;
Or mid the waste the solitary palm,
To him that toils the pathless desert through,
Which marks the waters that most sweetly blend
Their murmurs with the boughs that o'er them bend.

XXIX.

Changed be the theme, for on my spirit dawn
The beauties of a land that is not mine ;
Away, thou saddening impulse, hence, begone !
For I would own a sweeter rule than thine :
Before me spreads the flower enamelled lawn,
And scenes where stern and beautiful combine,
And the dark eyes of warm Italian maids
Glance, as they wander 'neath the chestnut shades.



xxx.

Romantic land ! thy skies perennial glow,
Thy waters that ne'er lose the hue of heaven,
Thy crumbling halls, where wandered long ago
The feet of heroes, from the hill-tops seven
Too briefly seen, yet still before me flow
In warmest colouring ; a lifetime given
To thee were spent in ecstacy, alas !
Ere I revisit thee mine own may pass.

xxxI.

But what of thee my spirit doth retain,
As glimpses of a treasured dream shall lie,
Until I turn my steps to thee again,
And vivify those remnants ere they die ;
To roam once more along thy classic plain,
Gaze on thy waters' blue serenity,
Sweet Como, thine, and dip my wandering oar
Where the white Alps look down on Maggiore.

XXXII.

Ye of Old Rome ! whose spirits still must haunt
The seven hills, for which ye lived and died ;
And thou, whose injured pride repaid the taunt
Against thy rising wall with fratricide ;
Do ye not mourn to mark the pennon flaunt,
The Gallia pennon, o'er your prostrate pride,
And this degenerate race of those who claim
Your ancient city, and your Roman name ?

XXXIII.

Whose heavenly land might tempt an angel down,
Whose dastard deeds but rouse their foeman's
laugh,
While every heart, amid the slaves that own,
Is but your withered glory's cenotaph !
The age foretold hath come, the age to crown
The cup of vice, which they had learnt to quaff
Who were their sires' sires, with blackest vein,
And these unto the loathsome dregs will drain.

XXXIV.

Well might the ancient stone that bears thy form,
To hear again the well known shout of war
Kindle to sudden life and feeling warm,
And hope to hail thy city conqueror ;
To find her yet unbending to the storm,
And from defeat draw courage as of yore ;
Then shocked relapse to cold unfeeling stone,
To meet her thus in form and soul o'erthrown !

XXXV.

Sad Rome ! the Gaul hath girt thy wall with war,
The Gallic ensign flutters o'er thy woe,
And the hot shell comes hissing from afar,
To level that which time had spared to o'erthrow ;
Or when o'erthrown, lacked further power to mar,
And hallowed with a mellower, holier glow,
A chastened echo of old years receding,
And no Camillus to thy rescue speeding !

xxxvi.

Thy pride hath past, but not the less thy clime
Is of earth's fairest, and ten-thousand names
Of Heroes, whom thou borest in thy prime,
Shall be the deathless portion of thy claims
Upon the reverence of future time,
That piece by piece thy haughty grandeur tames ;
Yet shalt thou triumph o'er him, this shall be
Thy last, most glorious, spotless victory.

xxxvii.

But thou, my native isle, that art the first
Among the nations, look to faded Rome,
And learn, that ere that mighty structure burst
It was herself that struck the ruin home !
Learn from her fate, by inner faction curst,
That 'tis its unison upholds the dome ;
Let all the ire of nations pour on thee,
Be firm within, and still shalt thou be free !



XXXVIII.

Pride of the West ! the World, art thou not fair ?
Hast thou no flowing meads, no happy skies ?
Can other lands at all with thee compare
For blooming beauty, and for sunny eyes ?
Hail ! to thy crystal meres, and mountains where
Helvellyn towers, and smiling Derwent lies ;
Or on the umbrageous banks of green Winander,
Thy lowing herds, and blue-eyed peasants wander.

XXXIX.

There, there, are spots where I have loved to roam,
At early morn, at noon, or eve's decline,
In silent ecstacy, nor wend me home
Till the broad summer moon began to shine ;
Then have I sought the forest's verdant dome,
Where nature's stateliest column, rose the pine ;
Or rugged oaks o'ershadowed all the glade,
And chequered light through lengthening vistas
played.

XL.

In such an hour, just when the queen o'ertops
Th' opposing ridge, and quivers on the lake,
Whose waters through the intervening copse,
In silver gleamings tremulously break ;
And not a stem that cracks, a leaf that drops,
But seems too harsh a dissonance to make,
When shadows fall fantastic on the way,
In such an hour as this, who will not say,

XLI.

I love the woods ? There is a spell of power
In the green stillness of a forest glade,
Far more than in th' intoxicating hour,
Amid the banquet's glare and pomp displayed ;
The brightness man can coin must cloud and lower,
And through the calm of retrospection fade ;
But nature freshens as we linger o'er:
The more we love, we contemplate the more.

XLII.

And ye, ye mountains ! at a glance with you
Pierces my soul into the summer sky ;
And yon loved summits, faintly, farly blue,
In all their varied light and shade draw nigh ;
Beauties that come not with the distant view,
Yet still can charm imagination's eye,
Begot by past realities ; so well
I know the aspect of the rugged fell.

XLIII.

I love at eve to wander to the hills
When rain hath fall'n, and each gentle height
Sends leaping down a thousand silver rills,
To glitter in the glance of sunset light ;
And every flower the pearl of dew distils,
As though it wept the coming of the night ;
On every leaf, in every chalice gay,
Is set that little shrine of trembling ray.

XLIV.

I love to pause when roaming o'er the fell,
To gaze upon the black and silent mere,¹
Sunk in the deep glen, as a giant well,
So dark and motionless, so deep and clear :
All near is hushed, the tinkle of the bell
Alone falls faintly on the straining ear,
Where roams untended the wild mountain flock,
Or screams the falcon, wheeling o'er the rock !

XLV.

O let me linger here till day goes down,
And leading forth each coyly, shrinking star
O'er glittering cliff, dark wood and mountain brown,
Their crescent queen advances in her car ;
And when the heaven she doth fully crown,
In the black waters, where no breezes mar
Her perfect image she doth longest linger,
And later flee before morn's rosy finger.

XLVI.

I love to scale the breezy mountain's head,
When at its base too warm the sunbeams glow,
To track the torrent, from its rugged bed
Loud thund'ring to the smiling valley go ;
Then as a silver skein unravellèd, [flow,
Through flow'ring meads, and 'neath high foliage
Till lost amid the low o'erhanging shades,
Or lessening as its course winds on, it fades.

XLVII.

I love beneath the pale moonlight, to climb
To where those monumental records stand,
Piled by the skill of dark primeval time,
When superstition scowled along the land,
And all religion was a deed of crime ;
While human blood ran red 'neath human hand,
To gods before whose shrine the Briton rude
Bent low his head—in this wild solitude !

XLVIII.

The heavens are clear, and o'er the circle thrown
The mellowing radiance; o'er the gentle mound,
In Ghostly form, each gray mysterious stone,
Casts its weird shadow on the sacred ground ;
The spot long reverenced, now is still and lone,
And by the wasted circle's magic round ²
The night winds mock and whistle idly by,
Its aspect of most desert majesty.

XLIX.

Ye cold gray brethren,—seated mid the waste
Where ye have sat in silence whilst the seal
Of pregnant ages, on your aspect traced,
Hath pressed and left ye powerless to reveal
One awful syllable, thus grandly based,
Insensible to all this world can feel
Of change, of bliss, of woe,—strong types are ye,
Of contemplation wrapt in Deity !

L.

The awful pomp, the muttered Runic chaunt,
The gory rite to Woden or to Thor,
The human victims' agonizing pant,
The words of Hell that shuddering breezes bore,
Are whispered in tradition's dubious grant;
While ye who saw these pagan deeds of yore
Gaze calmly on a christian land from hence,
With the intenseness of mute eloquence,

LI.

O had ye tongues ! a tale more dread were heard,
Than ought your present peaceful age can show ;
Now on the stone of blood the mountain bird
Trills his blithe carol, and the harebells blow ;
On your stern presence breaks the jesting word
Of those that idly come and idly go,
But little reck they of those deeds of ill,
And gore that warmed the stone now bleak and chill.



LII.

I love to wander when the sun is breaking
Thro' billowy mists that 'long the mountain float,
While blithe to greet the rosy morn's awaking
Each early songster tunes his merry note ;
And on light wing the merry breeze is shaking
The dewdrop from the mountain's heathery coat ;
Beneath, the lake, a mirror spread by nature,
Reflects unmarred its calm majestic stature.

LIII.

'Tis beauteous all ! and each in its own way,
A thing I love, and love to muse upon ;
The rise, the glory, the decline of day ;
The hurrying waters, coming, passing, gone ;
The free mist drifting o'er the heathery brae,
The mountain waste, wide spreading, chill and
lone ;
The impending crag, the cold black wood beneath,
The far blue distance o'er the purple heath.

LIV.

Adieu awhile ! sweet scenes of rural bliss,
Adieu ! fair vales within whose peaceful breast
The waters, that their margin softly kiss,
Are lulled into a clear cerulean rest ;
O ! he that craves more calm delight than this,
Shall seek in vain, nor find one spot more blest,
No fairer mixture of the soft and stern,
Where weary heart and head more gladly turn.

I.

A WAY once more, beneath another sky,
The pen resumes its unconnected strain,
New wonders break upon the expectant eye,
The heart its feeble tribute pours again ;
The Alps in their unclouded majesty,
Cold solitude and winter's endless reign,
Appal the eye ; yet 'neath their awful throne
The lyre would wake once more its falt'ring tone.

II.

Who hath not felt a strong and deep degree
Of secret awe, that e'er hath climbed to view
'Twixt snow-clad pinnacles that icy sea,³
With its hushed storminess, and gulfs of blue ?
Who e'er hath gazed on it unfeelingly,
Chained to the ancient hills, while riseth through
The deep and azure chasms, faint resounding,
The voice of hidden waters onward bounding ?

III.

Go not to view it when th' adventurous throng
Th' indignant echoes of the Alps awake ;
And rouse with heedless jest, or sportive song,
The hills that hear the avalanche, and quake ;
But when the moon is up yon crags among,
Then to its verge the silent pathway take ;
There seat thyself and gaze, and thou shalt feel
A thrill of rapture, though thy heart were steel ;

IV.

'Twas mine to wander to that spot of green,
And bubbling spring, where Alpine flow'rets blow
In solitary loveliness unseen,
Like virtue hidden in this world of woe :
Around that islet's smiling summer mien
Spread the drear tracts of never yielding snow,
And all above me, in their wildest glory,
The massive Alps rose silent, stern, and hoary.

v.

Yet with a gleam of sun athwart their face,
Such as will lighten on the brow of age,
They looked upon that verdant resting place,
And gems that seemed to mock the tempest's
rage ;
Though needing but a breath to mar their grace,
Where were the heart, upon whose fruitless page
Those simple flowers would not inscribe for ever
A memory mocking blotting time's endeavour ?

VI.

It is such incidents as these that give
The life of man its poetry, and form
Wild flowers of the memory, which outlive
Adversity's most wintry, chilling storm ;
And bloom in, when the snows of misery drive,
A garden of the heart still green and warm,
Watered by springs of thankfulness, which they
In blossoms of the fairest hue repay.

VII.

Sweet flowers ! I have ye yet, with faded dye,
Your leaves no more their odorous breath exhale,
Yet are ye redolent of memory,
And still each remnant, sapless, wan and pale,
Can breathe new lustre to fond fancy's eye,
And still repeat th' associated tale,
Loud in connexion with the days gone by,
Though voiceless and without vitality.

VIII.

Ye pour more warmth into the spirit still,
Call forth more tender gushings from the breast,
Than ought that specious art can frame or will,
The page whereon ye delicately rest,
When turned in haste, 'tis with a pleasing thrill,
Pregnant with dear remembrance long supprest,
As germs that hid through dreary winter's gloom,
Need but a genial warmth to burst in bloom.

IX.

But thou ! of yon huge host the mighty one,
To attempt thy praise were useless, to adore
Thy majesty were impious, but to shun
All mention were in vain, I may not soar
To the high path that many have begun,
Nor dare attempt to trace thy wonders o'er ;
But I have watched and mused, and know thee well,
And felt thee, that thou wert ineffable.

X.

Yea ! I have watched thee, when the queen of night
From 'twixt thy mountain satellites arose,
And, meeting in thyself one near as bright,
Scattered her smiles along thy silent snows,
Till thy stern aspect softened into light,
And all thy glittering glaciers did disclose
A thousand veins of silver, as there fell
The growing splendour on each pinnacle :

xi.

Yea ! I have watched thee when the look of morn
Drew her own blush into thy brow so pale,
And darkened to a scene yet more forlorn
Thy belt of pines o'ershadowing the vale,
Where night yet lingered, as the day was born,
And slowly 'gan thy mighty back to scale,
Till with a flash, when thy huge top was won
Into the gladdened glen full burst the sun.

xii.

Stranger ! hast gazed upon a snow-clad height,
From some green bower, fair bank, or shady
creek ;
Did not thine eye with fancy's fairy flight,
Centre itself upon that one cold peak ?
And disregarding all that else was bright,
In one long gaze the distant summit seek ?
There is a pleasing mystery they can know
Who oft have mused, hangs o'er eternal snow.

xiii.

All hail ! fit emblem of the Deity,
Majestic type of purity above ;
Untainted and unmoved eternally,
Unfathomable sign of infinite love ;
Yet awful in thy wrath, that from on high
Levels the work of man, the stately grove,
The sapling, mansion, hut, all bow before thee,
The spirit of omnipotence is o'er thee.

xiv.

Hast thou the name of man, audacious clay !
So weakly wilful, or profanely bold,
That durst deny thy God, yet through each day,
The wonder-teeming universe behold ?
Doth not creation's every atom say,
Can ought but Deity perfection mould ?
Was it from chance yon mighty mountain rose ?
Did chance beget those everlasting snows ?

xv.

Look to the sun with day-producing beams,
The silvery moon, the starry host of heaven ;
The cooling perpetuity of streams,
The winds, the clouds that by those winds are
driven,
The storm, the thunder, and the lightning gleams,
The forest monarch to the centre riven !
The boiling deep, the echoing cavern's height ;
The thousand wonders of thy daily sight.

xvi.

Hast thou a doubt ? pluck from its tender stem,
Sprung mid the ruin's wasted might, yon flower,
Could all the skill of ages form one gem
Like this, the product of a vernal shower ?
Will not decay's stern potency condemn
Its hues to perish in another hour ?
Thou'l miss it not amid a thousand more,
That bloom as beauteous as it bloomed before.

xvii.

Now mark the ruin where it lately sprung,
Where are the hands that laboured at the stone?
Where are the years that saw its remnants young,
And where itself? into oblivion gone :⁵
They shall not live again, decay is flung [moan;
'Long the damp wall, where winds in passing
This was man's work! gaze on th' enamelled sod,
It is the work of him thou doubtst, God !

xviii.

Again the scene hath vanished, as the vale
Beneath the mist, whose partial shroud reveals
Short glimpses of its beauty as ye scale
The shadowy mountain; but time onward steals,
And we with it new prospects gladly hail;
And if the heart a shade of sadness feels,
As all behind grows pale, the opening view
Recalls the pleasure that it lately knew.



xix.

He that hath years to feel, and first hath seen
Without a tear his country's shore grow dim,
Ere yet the wave hath lost its hue of green,
O bid me not to be a friend to him :
And now as o'er the vessel's side I lean,
That gladly on her southern course doth skim,
There is a vacant fulness of the heart,
A voice that calls to those from whom we part.

xx.

O thou most glorious sea, e'en when, as now,
My heart is sad within me, yet I feel
The joyous aspect that thy billows show
With their own gladness o'er my spirit steal ;
Thy language,—for thou utterest, although
Unto the heart not hearing,—doth reveal
Th' intensity of joyfulness, that lends
A portion unto him that o'er thee bends.



XXI.

It is the hour that parts the night, dividing
The present from the future, and the bark
Is gently onward o'er the waters gliding ;
So gently, scarce the motion may we mark,
But that the wave against her progress chiding
Lashes the prow in petulance ; but hark !
The bell gives forth its deep and measured tone,
And now 'tis hushed,—another day hath flown !

XXII.

So creep the hours, marked by th' unerring bell,
Till morn resumes her empire o'er the main,
To melt to-day, which night again must quell,
To yield herself unto the morn again ;
The bluely darkening wave, the long slow swell,
Speak of the southern climes we quickly gain,
That lend a deeper sky, a sun more warm,
And breathe upon the eve a mellower charm.

xxiii.

The dark blue sea hath swallowed up the sun,
A belt of glory still survives his pride,
'Gainst which the heaving wave shows huge and dun,
As rolls the sluggish bark from side to side.
For as the mountain billows 'neath her run,
The tall masts sweep the heaven in circle wide ;
While sails that flap, and spars that groan and crack,
Blend with the dash of waves when beaten back ;

xxiv.

Far scattering showers of radiance, as they break
O'er blue profundity, where things of light
In many a wondrous form their being take,
And gleam as Meteors in the Ocean's night :
Behind, the rising moon doth broadly shake
Her splendour o'er the waters, and all white
The canvass, as the wing of some huge bird,
Stirs in the gust that scarce as yet is heard.

XXV.

'Tis no pale queen, that northern climates prize,
Who weeps in watery loneliness, while they
Her due attendants close their drowsy eyes,
Or quiver with a struggling, feeble ray ;
But pendent from the purple of the skies,
She rules no night, but her own mellowed day ;
While frequent from the choir that wait on her,
Shoots on its path some radiant messenger.⁶

XXVI.

Thou unit of that glorious, vast creation,
That greets us dwellers in this lower air ;
Say, cleaving earthward from thy heavenly station,
Why hast thou left thy shining brethren there :
Or art thou but a brilliant emanation
Of those ethereal realms that mortals dare
Pretend to knowledge of ? or hath a world
Like ours, with thee been into chaos hurled ?



xxvii.

O Thou mysterious, yet most beauteous thing !
It cannot be that thou art formed alone
For admiration ! on thy fiery wing
Perchance some spirit leaves his starry throne,
On earthly mission of th' almighty king ;
Howe'er it be, when thy bright path is thrown
Athwart the heaven, thou carriest with thee
A strong confession of divinity !

xxviii.

Hark to the shout, the tramp of hurrying feet,
The cheering cry that aids the sailor's haul ;
Hastes every hand to curb the bellying sheet,
And trim the sails ere strikes the coming squall ;
For in our wake the blackening masses meet,
And whitening rolls the wave, a misty pall
Of chilling vapour drives along the main,
Then bows the shivering bark, then bounds again.

XXIX.

Away ! away ! upon the wings of wind !
Away ! away ! upon the ocean's roar !
Though rude the gale, yet we will deem it kind,
Though fierce the waves, yet welcome be their
war ;
Adieu ! awhile the land we leave behind,
And hail ! a softer and more southern shore ;
Bound on, thou bark ! for hearts beat high in thee,
And winds without ; bear on the bark, thou sea !

XXX.

Madeira hail !⁷ how proudly o'er the deep
Bursts on the waking eye thy rock-girt shore,
And lichenèd crags where mists of morning sleep,
While at their feet th' untiring billows war ;
Their distant thunderings on the waters sweep,
Contrasting with the peace that ripples o'er
The violet crystal of th' unbroken bay,
Till blent into the fires of coming day.



xxxI.

Hygeian Isle ! to thee sweet south doth lend
The balmy languor of perennial spring ;
Thy groves ne'er lose the varied hues they blend,
Thy golden songsters⁸ ne'er forget to sing :
The crags that o'er thy sleeping waters bend,
As those that love, above the cherished thing
That breathes thereof again, so lovingly
Lean o'er the soft siesta of the sea !

xxxII.

The warm repose that slumbers on the hill,
The dreamy languor floating on the tide,
And sounds that breathe tranquillity, instil
A wrapt forgetfulness of all beside ;
Till they too be forgot, and on the will
To move, to act, to speak, doth sweetly glide
A spell forbidding action, and the eye
Wakes to the realm of ideality !

XXXIII.

Of brightest power, and most voluptuous hue,
Yet sweet connexion with the things that are,
Which lapse to purer form, but kindred to
Their earthly beauty, and the wave afar,
The whispering winds, mid boughs that whisper too,
The babbling of the brook, where pebbles mar
The hasty current, blend in that sweet trance,
To music of most consonant dissonance.

XXXIV.

The Lotos spirit ruleth o'er the land,
He slumbereth 'mid the vines upon the hill,
He dreameth where the couching waves expand,
The air is all his breath ; beside the rill,
The lily of oblivion in his hand,
He uttereth in soft murmurings his will ;
He rocketh on the forest, from the bird
That chaunts all hours therein, his voice is heard.



xxxv.

But he that would thy sterner beauties see,
Must leave the south with vines o'ertrellised down,
And wind 'long cliffs whose paths appal the eeé,
Till dwindles to a pigmy size the town;⁹
Then pause to gaze upon the dark blue sea,
And glorious scene that doth such labour crown;
Then quit the smiling shore he late hath viewed,
For inland vales and barren solitude.

xxxvi.

O'er lengthy hill, and rough abrupt descent,
Right slowly on the northern way doth lead,
And ere the heat of day be fully spent,
I ween, right wearied are both man and steed;
But with the eve the path is downward bent
Midst cooling grove and intersprinkled mead,
Again the frequent haunts of men we spy,
And once again Old Ocean glads the eye :

XXXVII.

Smoothing his billows to a fond caress,
In ripples whispering peace unto the shore,
In sweet accordance with the loveliness
Of clime and hour that now most strongly pour
Their balm upon the feelings, and impress
The spirit with an impulse to adore
The holiness of eve, that can impart
Such depth of quiet to the human heart.

XXXVIII.

There is no harshness for the ear or eye,
But all is mellowed to a tranquil tone,
A richness of embodied harmony,
Of light and shade in clear commingling thrown ;
In cool repose the woods unruffled lie, [own ;
Whence one sweet songster makes this hour his
And pours, in tribute to declining day,
The modulated cadence of his lay.

XXXIX.

Fond bird, that pour'st thy carol on the eve
That lists to thee in silence, there is wrote
A lesson in thy voice, that ne'er should leave
The heart that once hath listened to thy throat ;
For he that on its fulness dwells may weave
To hymns of adoration each sweet note,
And lift his soul with thee to Him whose power
And bounty made the eve's most hallowed hour.

XL.

The hour of beauty from the heavens descending ;
The hour of all that's tender as the dove,
The hour of hues most exquisitely blending,
The hour of winds that odorously rove ;
The hour of poesy and thoughts extending,
The hour of feeling, and the hour of love ;
The hour of rosy mirth, and pleasing folly,
The hour of pensiveness and melancholy.

XL.I.

The sun hath sunk, but o'er the rugged marge
Of yon dusk hill the soft-illumined sky
Heralds the Lady of the night, whose targe
Draws slowly up its broad effulgency ;
Ne'er in her course so beauteously large,
As now when growing on th' expectant eye ;
The spirit ne'er so deeply can absorb
As now, the charm, the feeling of that orb ;—

XL.II.

The feeling ! yea, the deep and silent sense
Of rapture, that I cannot well define ;
As if those beams unsullied could condense
All soft and purest attributes they twine,
All their most mute expressive eloquence,
Into a single soul, and that were mine ;
Bright queen ! when thou dost speak unto the sight,
There is no gloom, no loneliness in night.



XLIII.

The heart communes with thee, the soul unbidden
Blends with thy ray, and wafts itself more nigh
To thy bright mysteries, half seen, half hidden,
Yet too remote for human gaze to pry
Into their depth, though soaring art hath ridden
On eagles' wings, and with undaunted eye
To scan thy nightly realm, 'tis but to own
Thee too divine, and die when that is known.

XLIV.

The bold conjecture, the gigantic plan,
The wordy system of the portioned sphere,
The vain pursuit of things too high for man,
Reach to one dubious point,—then disappear,
Lost in the infinity they strive to span ;
O to the thinking heart more, doubly dear,
The nightly union of the heavenly host
As nature shows, than all enthusiasts' boast.



XLV.

In cold contempt on these thou send'st thy smile,
And on their art's intrusion, but there wakes
An eye within us, that will watch the while,
Reflecting the pure beam that o'er it breaks
From thee, upon the heart, thou canst beguile
The spirit from the world, till it partakes
Not of the sages' wild hypothesis,
But of a calmer and more abstract bliss.

XLVI.

But thou must pass with night, thy beauteous rays
But have their season, as have all things fair,
Thy smiles must pale before the solar blaze,
And those that loved forget how bright they were ;
And I must quit this land, wherein I gaze
Upon thy full serenity ; I dare
Prolong the strain no further, for I part
From all that prompts the hand and swells the heart.



XLVII.

Thou and thy sky and clime, that all upbore
This broken voice, must vanish ; if no word
Of deep regret escape, the heart is sore,
And mourneth with the voice that is not heard ;
All can proclaim their grief, let me the more
Be sad in silence, for 'tis not inferred
By loud expression, but those hearts that weep
Have placid brows, as currents running deep.

XLVIII.

Once more, and we have parted ; the lone sea
Is all before me spreading into night,
And far behind the halls of revelry
Flash o'er the silent bay their mirrored light ;
The dream is passing ; I awake to see
Things as they are, and wish them once less bright.
No longer heard the voice of those beloved,
No longer seen the spots together roved.

XLIX.

The dream is passing, and 'tis time this pen
Should cease its wandering, and the heart relearn
To love the world, and worldliness of men ;
And leave recurring memory to yearn
For happy days to come,—I know not when,
But hope will whisper that they may return,
When heart and foot shall wander forth once more,
This pen resume the strain it now gives o'er.

TO L—.

I.

WHEN they to the festive hall are gone
That might have cheered thy youthful
sorrow,
And thou art left to mourn alone,
And languish for the tardy morrow;

II.

When from thy casement looking forth,
Thou greet'st perchance that well known star,
That leads thine inner vision north,
To many a loved one, now afar;

III.

O dare it then one moment err,
From those to whom 'tis doubly due,
To one, whose thoughts to hours recur,
That thou and he together knew?

IV.

To hours on the dark sea foam,
Where I am now, and where our eyes
Would oft, in memory of our home,
To yonder star in concert rise ?

V.

Full many a planet's splendid orb
Shed forth a fuller, steadier ray ;
Yet could that gem our thoughts absorb,
Since it could point where England lay.

VI.

It is a thought of tender bliss,
That friends, though severed by the main,
May muse on ought in hours like this
That draws their spirits near again :

VII.

Though thou art in thy southern isle,
And I upon the rolling sea,
I gaze, and deem that star the while
A radiant link 'twixt thee and me.



VIII.

O may that gentle radiance sink
With kindred sense to either heart ;
With one such sweet and lasting link,
It is not quite farewell—to part.

IX.

O may it soothe thy lonely hour,
As once upon the lonely sea ;
But can that trembler breathe the power
To turn a single thought to me ?

March, 1852.

NOTES.

Note 1, Page 25.

All who have any acquaintance with the beautiful scenery of our own lakes, and who has not? will remember the tarns scattered so thickly among the hills, so well realizing Byron's description of the lake of Nemi.

Calm as cherished hate its surface wears
A deep, cold, settled aspect nought can shake.

Note 2, Page 27.

The Druidical circle here alluded to is situated on a hill overlooking the town of Keswick; though the stones composing it, and the circuit are both small when compared with those of similar relics, the site that it occupies seems, as doubtless was often the case, to have been selected for the peculiar beauty and extent of the scenery it commands.

Note 3, Page 31.

The Mer du Glace and the neighbouring scenery are in these days of cheap and easy travelling so well known as to render explanation useless.

Note 4, Page 32.

The Jardin is a spot of peculiar interest and beauty, to be reached only by traversing the greater portion of the Mer du Glace, and the ascent of the opposite mountain : while all around is covered with perpetual snow, it presents the unexpected appearance of a small plat of green sward, scattered with several simple, but from their position, most interesting flowers ; it is not, as usually represented in prints, and according to general belief, situated in the centre of the glacier, but comfortably surrounded by a barrier of granite rocks.

Note 5, Page 39.

Though it may seem strange to allude to a ruin in the valley of Chamouni, there is, or was when this was written, a crumbling, not castle certainly, but house, at no great distance from the village, which was as fit for the illustration above as the oldest castle would have been ; for the damp and the decay I will answer fully.

Note 6, Page 43.

Those only who have resided in a southern climate can have any idea of the splendour of the heavenly bodies, more especially of the falling stars, in those latitudes.

Note 7, Page 45.

The first view of the island of Madeira is singularly beautiful. Its eastern extremity, which usually first becomes visible to voyagers from England, presents an abrupt headland, encrusted with green lichen, visible for a long distance.

Note 8, Page 46.

Madeira is celebrated for its canaries. The wild song of these birds, when heard from some secluded spot, is not inferior to that of any of the feathered tribe that I remember.

Note 9, Page 48.

The roads of Madeira may vie in the several attributes of steepness, roughness, slipperyness, in short, in all bad qualities, with those of any part of the world, equally civilized.

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